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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, May 25, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "ODDS AND ENDS OF NEWS." Information from the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, the Bureau of Plant Industry, the Bureau of Public Roads, and the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

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Six million dollars is a lot of money. Six million dollars is an awful lot of money to go up in flames. Yet that's the amount that burns up on farms in this country every year from just one cause -- carelessness with kerosene and gasoline. Dr. David Price of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Chemistry and Soils says that a fire threat lurks in every can of gasoline and kerosene. He says that these inflammable liquids are sixth among the causes of farm fires and responsible for 5 to 7 percent of the total fire loss each year.

To help prevent such fires, the Department of Agriculture offers a bulletin called "Safe Use and Storage of Gasoline and Kerosene on the Farm." This bulletin is No. 1638 and as long as the free supply lasts, you can have a copy by writing to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C. The bulletin has been revised recently and gives latest information on precautions against fire as well as ways of putting out gasoline and kerosene fires.

Dr. Price believes that many people do not know the explosion hazard of kerosene and gasoline and that others disregard it. The vapor of gasoline is so highly explosive that it has been called "liquid dynamite." It is dangerous to use gasoline for dry cleaning in the home. It may explode from even a tiny spark of static electricity produced by rubbing the clothing as you clean it. Housekeepers who take chances on cleaning clothes with gasoline are flirting with great danger.

As for kerosene, though that is not so inflammable as gasoline, it also gives off vapors which may be easily ignited. Dr. Price says that it is dangerous to start a fire in the house with kerosene and even more dangerous with gasoline.

Now here's a little news for motorists. This comes from the Bureau of Public Roads where they have been making a study of traffic conditions and ways to improve them. Men who have been making this study find that one of the great difficulties of driving today is that traffic laws in the different States differ so much. In fact, the mere crossing of a State line may change a safe and prudent driver into a lawbreaker and an unsafe driver -- the natural result of the non-uniformity of traffic laws in the States.

The Bureau's report to Congress recommends uniform traffic regulations throughout each State -- with local ordinances subject to approval by the State and enforced primarily by local officers in cooperation with the State.



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Here's another bit of news on motoring from the same Bureau. Less than 2 out of every hundred cars on the main highways are traveling more than 100 miles to reach their destination. And 8 out of 10 are traveling less than 20 miles. These average figures come from 11 of the 43 States taking part in the highway planning survey of the Bureau of Public Roads.

The main highways and their extensions through cities carry almost 60 percent of all the motor traffic. Scarcely more than 10 percent of the motor traffic is on all secondary and local rural roads yet in <sup>total</sup> mileage these roads are 8 times as long as the main highways.

Here's a little item about the movies. Out of every 10 dimes that village families spend for recreation, about 3 go for motion-picture admissions. That's what the Bureau of Home Economics reports from its recent study of consumer purchases in 140 representative villages. This holds true for villages in New England, the Central and Atlantic States, the Mountain and Plains area, and for villages on the Pacific Coast.

Movies proved to be first choice of diversions in these representative American villages. Of the total amount spent for recreation, 29 to 31 percent went for the movies. In the Southeast the percentage was even higher with white families in 33 villages spending 36 percent of recreation money for movies. Negro families spent nearly 37 percent.

Recreation expenses included money spent for admissions to amusements; games and sports, including equipment, supplies, fees and licenses; radio, pianos and other musical instruments; dues to social clubs; and money spent for family pets and toys for children. But the movies proved to be the most nearly universal form of entertainment for village families and families spent more dollars for admission than they did for any other form of recreation.

The last item of news for today concerns the ice-water bath that cools fruits and vegetables before they start for market. The housewife in the city wants to buy her fruits and vegetables as fresh and crisp as when they left the farm--perhaps a thousand or more miles away. And the ice-water bath has done much to satisfy her demands. Precooling is what helps fresh produce to arrive at market in good condition. It lowers the temperature of the fruits and vegetables more evenly and quickly than ice in refrigerating cars. It slows up ripening. It helps control diseases that might develop in transit. And it cuts the cost of refrigerating during shipping.

When farmers were first shown the advantage of precooling fruit and vegetables before shipping, they couldn't take advantage of it because they lacked the equipment. Only the cold rooms of certain warehouses made it available. Then, Department of Agriculture specialists developed portable equipment for precooling produce after loading on cars. New innovations in Florida and California are expected to make it possible for even more farmers to use precooling.

That concludes odds and ends of news for today.

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